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Agenda item 9

ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

Report of the Second (Social) Committee

1. The Second (Social) Committee considered the question of the advancement of women (agenda item 9) at its 5th to 10th and 14th meetings, on 16, 17, 20, 21 and 23 May 1991. It had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on its tenth session (A/46/38); 1/

(b) Letter dated 2 February 1991 from the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/46/77-E/1991/13);

(c) Report of the Board of Trustees of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women on its eleventh session (E/1991/21);

(d) Report of the Commission on the Status of Women on its thirty-fifth session (E/1991/28); 2/

(e) Statement submitted by the International Federation of Women Lawyers, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, category II (E/1991/NGO/1).

1/ To be issued as Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 38.

2/ To be issued as Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1991, Supplement No. 28.

2. At the 5th to 7th and 10th meetings, the Committee held a general discussion on the item. At the 5th meeting, on 16 May, the Committee heard an introductory statement by the Director of the Division for the Advancement of Women of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs. A statement was also made by the Officer-in-Charge of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women.

3. At the 5th meeting, on 16 May, statements were made by the representatives of China, Algeria and Iraq and by the observer for Luxembourg (on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the European Community). A statement was also made by the observer for the European Community.

4. At the 6th meeting, on 16 May, statements were made by the representatives of Canada (also on behalf of Australia and New Zealand), Yugoslavia, France, Turkey, Mexico, Jamaica, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and New Zealand and by the observer for the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

5. At the 7th meeting, on 17 May, statements were made by the representatives of Finland (also on behalf of Denmark, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), the United States of America, Indonesia, Pakistan, Canada, the Bahamas, Czechoslovakia, Thailand and Morocco and by the observers for Egypt, Ghana, Albania and Norway.

6. At the 8th meeting, on 20 May, statements were made by the representatives of Austria, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and Kenya and by the observers for Cuba and the Dominican Republic.

7. At the 10th meeting, on 21 May, statements were made by the representative of Ecuador and the observers for the Philippines and the Republic of Korea. The representative of the World Bank also made a statement. Statements were also made by the observers for the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, the World Federation of Trade Unions and the International Federation of Business and Professional Women, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, category I.

Recommendations contained in the report of the Commission on the Status of Women on its thirty-fifth session

8. Chapter I of the report of the Commission on the Status of Women on its thirty-fifth session (E/1991/28) contained seven draft resolutions and two draft decisions recommended for adoption by the Council.

Improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat

9. At the 9th meeting, on 20 May, the Committee adopted draft resolution I, entitled "Improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat" (see para. 26 below, draft resolution I).

Violence against women in all its forms

10. At the 9th meeting, on 20 May, the Committee adopted draft resolution II, entitled "Violence against women in all its forms" (see para. 26 below, draft resolution II).

Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women

11. At the 9th meeting, on 20 May, the Committee adopted draft resolution III, entitled "Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women" by a recorded vote of 36 to 1, with 10 abstentions (see para. 26 below, draft resolution III). The voting was as follows:

In favour: Algeria, Argentina, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Botswana, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Chile, China, Ecuador, Finland, Guinea, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Mexico, Morocco, New Zealand, Pakistan, Peru, Spain, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Yugoslavia, Zambia.

Against: United States of America.

Abstaining: Bulgaria, Canada, Czechoslovakia, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Romania, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

The representative of Nicaragua stated that, although her delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution, her affirmative vote did not appear on the voting record.

12. After the draft resolution was adopted, a statement was made by the representative of Japan.

Women and children under apartheid

13. At the 9th meeting, on 20 May, the Committee adopted draft resolution IV, entitled "Women and children under apartheid", by a recorded vote of 31 to 1, with 16 abstentions (see para. 26 below, draft resolution IV). The voting was as follows:

In favour: Algeria, Argentina, Bahamas, Bahrain, Botswana, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Chile, China, Ecuador, Guinea, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Mexico, Morocco, Pakistan, Peru, Rwanda, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Yugoslavia, Zambia.

Against: United States of America.

Abstaining: Austria, Bulgaria, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

14. After the draft resolution was adopted, statements were made by the representatives of Turkey and Japan.

Disabled women

15. At the 9th meeting, on 20 May, the Committee adopted draft resolution V, entitled "Disabled women" (see para. 26 below, draft resolution V).

National, regional and international machinery for the advancement of women

16. At the 9th meeting, on 20 May, the Committee was informed that draft resolution VI, entitled "National, regional and international machinery for the advancement of women" had no programme budget implications. The Committee then adopted the draft resolution (see para. 26 below, draft resolution VI).

Refugees and displaced women and children

17. At the 9th meeting, on 20 May, the Committee adopted draft resolution VII, entitled "Refugees and displaced women and children" (see para. 26 below, draft resolution VII).

Report of the Commission on the Status of Women on its thirty-fifth session and provisional agenda and documentation for the thirty-sixth session of the Commission

18. At the 9th meeting, on 20 May, the Committee adopted draft decision I, entitled "Report of the Commission on the Status of Women on its thirty-fifth session and provisional agenda and documentation for the thirty-sixth session of the Commission" (see para. 27 below, draft decision I).

Request for additional conference facilities during the thirty-sixth session of the Commission on the Status of Women

19. At the 9th meeting, on 20 May, the Committee was informed that draft decision II, entitled "Request for additional conference facilities during the thirty-sixth session of the Commission on the Status of Women" had no programme budget implications. The Committee then adopted the draft decision (see para. 27 below, draft decision II).

Other proposals

International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women

20. At the 9th meeting, on 20 May, the representative of Argentina, on behalf of Algeria, Argentina, the Bahamas, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, 3/ Cuba, 3/ the Dominican Republic, 3/ Ecuador, Egypt, 3/ El Salvador, 3/ Greece, 3/ Italy, Jamaica, Mexico, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Peru, Spain, Tunisia, Turkey, Uruguay, Venezuela and Yugoslavia, introduced a draft resolution (E/1991/C.2/L.4) entitled "International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women". Subsequently, Bangladesh, Colombia and Morocco joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

21. At the 10th meeting, on 21 May, the Committee adopted the draft resolution (see para. 26 below, draft resolution VIII).

Elimination of discrimination against women in accordance with the aims of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

22. At the 9th meeting, on 20 May, the representative of Finland, on behalf of Australia, 3/ Austria, Bulgaria, Canada, Denmark, 3/ Finland, France, Germany, Greece, 3/ Iceland, 3/ Indonesia, Ireland, 3/ Italy, Mexico, Norway, 3/ the Philippines, 3/ Spain, Sweden, Turkey and Yugoslavia, introduced a draft resolution (E/1991/C.2/L.5) entitled "Elimination of discrimination against women in accordance with the aims of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women". Subsequently, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

23. At the 10th meeting, on 21 May, the Committee adopted the draft resolution (see para. 26 below, draft resolution IX).

Strengthening and rationalizing the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, United Nations Office at Vienna

24. At the 9th meeting, on 20 May, the representative of Austria, on behalf of Algeria, Argentina, Austria, the Bahamas, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Costa Rica, 3/ the Dominican Republic, 3/ El Salvador, 3/ Jamaica, the Philippines, 3/ Poland, 3/ Romania, Sweden and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, introduced a draft resolution (E/1991/C.2/L.6) entitled "Strengthening and rationalizing the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, United Nations Office at Vienna". Subsequently, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, 3/ Czechoslovakia and Turkey joined in sponsoring the draft resolution. The draft resolution was also considered under agenda item 7 (Social development). For action by the Committees see the report of the Committee on that item (E/1991/85).

3/ In accordance with rule 72 of the rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Council.

25. A statement on the programme budget implications of the draft resolution was issued in document E/1991/C.2/L.8.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SECOND (SOCIAL) COMMITTEE

26. The Second (Social) Committee recommends to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of the following draft resolutions:

[FOR THE TEXT OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS I-VII, SEE THE REPORT OF OF THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN (E/1991/28, CHAP. I, SECT. A)].

DRAFT RESOLUTION VIII

International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling its resolution 1990/16 of 24 May 1990, in which it took note of the report of the Board of Trustees of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women on its tenth session, 4/

Having considered the report of the Board of Trustees of the Institute on its eleventh session, 5/

Convinced of the important impact of the work of the Institute in the areas of research, training and information on questions related to women and development, work that is an essential prerequisite for bringing about changes in development that benefit women and society,

1. Takes note with satisfaction of the report of the Board of Trustees of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women on its eleventh session and the decisions contained therein; 5/

2. Commends the Institute for its efforts to integrate its research and training activities into the mainstream of development at the regional and national levels;

3. Reaffirms the catalytic role of the Institute in elaborating methodologies for carrying out research, training and information activities in new areas of interest affecting women and development;

4/ E/1990/34.

5/ E/1991/21.

4. Takes note with appreciation of the fact that the Institute is continuing to consider ways to strengthen its cooperation with the regional commissions and their national coordination centres and thereby expand its work at the regional and national levels;

5. Renews its appeal to Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and other potential donors to continue contributing and, to the extent possible, to increase their contributions to the United Nations Trust Fund for the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, thus ensuring the continuity and expansion of the Institute's work;

6. Expresses its appreciation to those Member States that have contributed to the Trust Fund for the Institute, which has enabled it to carry out its mandate to meet new challenges and take account of new trends in the areas of research, training and information related to women and development;

7. Requests the Secretary-General to appoint, as soon as possible, the Director of the Institute so that she may take up her duties within the framework of the mandate as established by the Statute of the Institute.

DRAFT RESOLUTION IX

Elimination of discrimination against women in accordance with the aims of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 34/180 of 18 December 1979, by which it adopted the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,

Recalling also General Assembly resolution 45/124 of 14 December 1990 and Economic and Social Council resolution 1990/17 of 24 May 1990,

Noting resolutions 35/1 of 7 March 1991 and 35/3 of 8 March 1991 adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirty-fifth session, 6/

Noting that in resolution 45/124, the General Assembly strongly supported the view of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women that the Secretary-General should accord higher priority within existing resources to strengthening technical and substantive support for the Committee,

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6/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1991, Supplement No. 8 (E/1991/28), chap. I, sect. C.

Having considered the report of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on its tenth session, 7/

Noting that the Committee agreed, in examining reports, to take due account of the different cultural and socio-economic systems of States parties to the Convention,

Noting with satisfaction the establishment of the practice of holding a pre-sessional working group three to five days prior to the Committee session,

Convinced that the close relationship between the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 44/25 of 20 November 1989, implies that the secretariats of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the Committee on the Rights of the Child should work closely together,

Welcoming the general recommendations contained in the report of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on its tenth session, 8/

Noting with appreciation the South Pacific regional seminar on the Convention held in Rarotonga, Cook Islanda, in March 1991, which recommended that all Pacific Island States accede to the Convention,

Aware that the tenth anniversary of the entry into force of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women will take place on 3 September 1991,

1. Takes note of the report of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on its tenth session;

2. Welcomes the ratification of or accession to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women by an increasing number of Member States;

3. Urges all States that have not yet ratified or acceded to the Convention to do so as soon as possible;

4. Urges the Secretary-General to strengthen the provision of training in the implementation of the Convention at the national, regional and interregional levels, especially in assisting States parties to meet their reporting obligations;

7/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 38 (A/46/38).

8/ Ibid., chap. I.

5. Urges States, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations to provide training opportunities on a regular basis for persons preparing periodic reports of States parties to the Convention;

6. Welcomes the initiatives taken to provide regional training courses on the preparation and drafting of reports of States parties for government officials and training and information seminars for States considering acceding to the Convention, and urges the relevant organs and organizations of the United Nations to support such initiatives;

7. Recommends that the strengthening of substantive and technical support for the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women be a priority in the proposed programme of work for the biennium 1992-1993 of the Division for the Advancement of Women;

8. Invites the international community to mark in an appropriate manner the tenth anniversary of the entry into force of the Convention;

9. Invites States parties to the Convention to make every possible effort to submit their initial implementation reports, as well as their second and subsequent periodic reports, in accordance with article 18 of the Convention and the guidelines provided by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, and to cooperate fully with the Committee in the presentation of their reports;

10. Requests the Secretary-General to continue to provide, facilitate and encourage, within existing resources, the dissemination of public information relating to the Committee, its recommendations, the Convention and the concept of legal literacy, taking into account the Committee's own recommendations in that regard;

11. Recommends that a close relationship be maintained between the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the Committee on the Rights of the Child and other United Nations human rights bodies and between the secretariats of those Committees.

27. The Second (Social) Committee also recommends to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of the following draft decisions:

[FOR THE TEXT OF DRAFT DECISIONS I AND II, SEE THE REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN (E/1991/28, CHAP. I, SECT. B)].